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**City Attorney Reports Lowest Payout in 14 Years**

***Aggressive Litigation and Specialized Training Contributes to Tort Payout Decrease***

City Attorney Casey Gwinn reports that payouts on personal injury lawsuits dropped by \$2 million in Fiscal Year 1997, down from \$3.1 million in Fiscal Year 1996. This years' payout of \$1.1 million marks the lowest level since 1984, a fourteen year low. Gwinn sites the combination of aggressive litigation postures, the manager's specialized training of city staff , and greater sensitivity to potential liabilities in design and repair of roadways as reasons for the decline. Another key factor contributing toward the liability reduction is the City Council's support of funds for street maintenance and sidewalk repair.

The City Attorney intends to maintain pressure on the downward trend by implementing policies and procedures that can help avoid significant liability in the future. "With a self-insured City, it's important to realize that when we say our payout on personal injury claims is two million dollars less, it's *your* money--the taxpayers money that we've saved" said Gwinn. "I intend to do everything I can to continue to aggressively protect those precious dollars", he said. At Gwinn's direction staff has begun working even more closely with Risk Management and other City departments to address potential problems in an early intervention, pro-active manner.

**TORT PAYMENTS per FISCAL YEAR**

**FISCAL YEAR PAYMENTS**

1984 \$995,737

1985 3,292,304

1986 3,547,089

1987 2,077,480

1988 6,387,485

1989 9,466,461

1990 14,664,793

1991 14,154,184

1992 6,178,161

1993 2,677,691

1994 3,028,728

1995 2,313,724

1996 3,159,813

1997 1,153,702

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